

PSSA ELA Writing Review

This year's test could ask you to write a narrative, informative, or argumentative essay. Below is a review checklist of what each type of writing should contain.

Narrative:

1. Choose a story that has a plot (setting, characters, problem, climax, resolution) that is reality-based experience.
2. Set up a flow-chart organizer with the sequence of events laid out.
3. Tell the story from the "I", first-person perspective, unless told to do otherwise.
4. Tell in chronological order, unless you choose to use a flashback. Use transition words- "next", "later", "meanwhile", etc.
5. Use colorful language...use adjectives and adverbs...use figurative language...use interesting verbs!
6. Use imagery to bring the story to life. Sight, sound, smell, taste, touch!!! Use Dialogue to bring characters to life!
7. NEW Paragraphs for changes in time, place, topic, or dialogue speaker.
8. In the ending paragraph, reflect and tell what you learned from this experience. Why was it important? What did you learn?

Informative:

1. Set up your 5-paragraph organizer. Use it!
2. Intro has a hook, definition of topic, and thesis. No "I" anywhere (except perhaps hook). No "in this paper" pointing to your essay. Name the author and the title in the intro; put the title in quotation marks. Make sure your thesis names the three answers that they are looking for!
3. Each of the 3 body paragraphs should contain a topic sentence, 4 well-explained supporting details, and a transition or concluding sentence. No I. All of the 4 supporting details should cite/show textual evidence! Pull lines from the text that support your answer, and put them in quotes. Explain everything well. Minimum 6 sentences per paragraph.
4. Conclusion should restate the thesis and then draw a final conclusion, a final new thought. Answer the question "So What" to get you to a new idea. Why is this idea important?

Argumentative:

1. Set up your 6-paragraph organizer. Use it!
2. Intro has a hook, definition of topic (explain the controversy! What are people arguing about?), and a clear thesis. No "I" anywhere (except perhaps the hook). No "in this essay" pointing at your paper. Name the author and the essay title (in quotation marks) in the intro. If required, offer a solution to a problem. Your thesis should name your three reasons for your argument.
3. 3 Body paragraphs should contain topic sentences, 4 supporting details and FACTS (not just opinions) to back up your argument, and textual evidence to support each claim. Explain your side well. Write a transition or conclusion sentence at the end of each.
4. Rebuttal paragraph should explain three arguments for their side of the argument, and you should then explain why each of the three reasons is incorrect. Finish with a conclusion sentence.
5. Conclusion should restate your thesis and answer the "So What?" question. Say something new! What's the effect this solution will offer in society?

****ALL ESSAYS should be written in perfect English. No errors whatsoever. Proofread several times! You should use an organizer, a rough draft, and a final draft written NEATLY in the test booklet. *****